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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001063

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DEPT FOR SCA/INS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: MAOISTS ANNOUNCE THREE MONTH UNILATERAL CEASE-FIRE

REF: A. KATHMANDU 1052

[1](#)B. 05 KATHMANDU 1958

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) On April 27, Maoist leader Prachanda declared a three month unilateral cease-fire, calling for the new Parliament to announce unconditional elections to a constituent assembly. The Parties denied that they had reached a deal with the Maoists on a date for such elections. Instead, they said the Parliament would pass a motion to move in principle toward elections to a constituent assembly. The Ambassador warned the Parties that if they set a date for elections, they would lose leverage to get the Maoists to genuinely renounce violence. The Parties spent April 27 preparing for the April 28 reinstatement of Parliament, and holding a large, festive rally in the capital to explain their roadmap to the people. Immediately after the Maoists ended their blockade on April 26, supplies began entering the capital.
End Summary.

Maoists Announce Three Month Cease-fire

[1](#)2. (U) On April 27, Maoist supremo Prachanda declared a three month unilateral cease-fire effective immediately in support of the movement for constituent assembly election, republican democracy and peace. In his press statement, Prachanda said that the truce was to facilitate the ongoing "people's struggle for a constituent assembly and a democratic republic so as to lead the struggle to a historic conclusion." He said the Maoists wanted the parliamentary political parties to announce an "unconditional" constituent assembly. He explained that "during the cease-fire, the People's Liberation Army will not launch any offensive military action during the cease-fire." However, Maoists would continue peaceful mobilization of party cadre. The cease-fire announcement followed a Maoist statement on April 26, that called off the economic blockade imposed on district headquarters around the country (ref A). (Note: The Maoists last announced a cease-fire on September 3, 2005 (ref B)

which was extended through January 2, 2006. End note.)

But Concern That Parties Struck A Deal

¶3. (C) On April 26, Pashupati Rana, head of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), told the Ambassador that he believed that Nepali Congress (NC) leader and PM-select GP Koirala and CPN-UML General Secretary MK Nepal had secretly agreed on a date for constituent assembly elections with the Maoists. When asked about this possibility by the Ambassador, Ram Sharan Mahat, NC Joint General Secretary, responded that the Parties had not set a date for elections. Mahat explained that Parliament would only pass a resolution committing to move toward constituent assembly elections. The Ambassador cautioned Mahat that if the Parties were now to agree on a date for constituent assembly elections with the Maoists, then the Parties would lose all leverage over the Maoists to get the latter to lay down their weapons and renounce violence as a precondition to participating in the political process. The Ambassador stressed that discussion between the Parties and the Maoists would prove positive only if the Maoists agreed to give up violence before participating in the political process. ADCM reiterated these points to UML Central Committee member Bhim Rawal. Rawal agreed that the Maoists had to lay down their arms before any constituent assembly elections could take place. The Maoists could not be allowed to manipulate the political process, Rawal said. Rawal also insisted that the Parties had not agreed on a date for constituent elections.

Parties Prepare for Parliament

¶4. (C) The political parties are busy preparing for the April 28 restoration of Parliament. On April 26, the Central Working Committees of most parties met to discuss the seven-party alliance agenda of announcing a constituent assembly, nullifying "regressive" decisions taken by the royal government, establishing a commission to investigate atrocities carried out to suppress the people's movement, and providing compensation to "martyrs." The NC and CPN-UML parties each expelled two Parliamentarians who had switched parties and served in the royal government. Though the NC (D) party was not registered as a separate party in Parliament when it split from the Nepali Congress after the last elections in 1999, NC (D) leaders announced that the party would have the status of a party separate from the NC in the upcoming Parliament. On April 27, the seven-party alliance held a large, peaceful rally in Kathmandu to explain their agenda to the people.

Life Returning to Normal in Capital

¶5. (SBU) While Maoists set fire to several vehicles in Pokhara and Hetauda for violating their blockade on the morning of April 26, normal transportation quickly resumed after Prachanda lifted the blockade later that afternoon (ref A). Life in the capital has started returning to normal. Trucks are entering the Valley, replenishing supplies of fuel, vegetables, and medicines. While the Nepal Oil Corporation's (NOC) Thankot depot had only the equivalent of one day's normal supply of gasoline in stock, NOC chief Umesh Dahal explained that fuel vehicles were entering the valley and NOC expected to bring fuel supplies back to normal by April 29. "As demand has gone up significantly, it will take about three days for the supply situation to normalize," Shiva Prasad Ghimire, president of Nepal Petroleum Dealers Association explained.

¶6. (U) While supplies of diesel and kerosene were returning to normal levels, NOC warned that it would need over a week to bring supplies of cooking gas to normal levels. Arjun Aryal, spokesperson for a local Fruit and Vegetable Market, reported that trucks with fruits and vegetables were entering the valley, causing prices to come down and stabilize. "Disregarding a very few commodities imported from India,

most varieties of fresh vegetables are now available in the market," he added. The transportation sector, including long distance passenger buses, also resumed normal operation, halted since the onset of the general strike on April 6.

Comment

17. (C) It remains to be seen whether the Maoists will decide to renounce violence permanently and turn in their weapons before a constituent assembly. We will continue to urge the Parties to stand strong and not give up their leverage on the Maoists by agreeing on a firm date for a constituent assembly, absent a Maoist commitment to permanently abandon violence.

MORIARTY